

May 28, 2015

Zoning Commission
Office of Zoning
441 4th St. NW, Suite 200-S
Washington, DC 20001

RE: Case No. ZC 14-11

Dear Zoning Commissioners:

You have the rare opportunity to protect the amazing residential streetscapes in Washington, DC by approving this zoning change. Please pass it without delay and make it effective immediately.

Our nation's capital received many awards for outstanding residential facades 100 years ago. You can preserve these streetscapes in R-4 residential areas which are not protected by historic designation. My beautiful neighborhood of Bloomingdale has amazing, nearly intact Victorian facades. However, we are ground zero for developers coming in, removing facades and turrets, "popping the top," and extending the rear of our houses. We are desperate for a solution to this disturbing trend.

Small single-family homes such as 42 W St NW are being converted into horrendously enormous condo buildings. This type of over-development has ruined the harmonious symmetry and rooflines. Additionally, it has cut off views, air circulation and eliminated sunlight for adjacent properties. It is a disaster for Bloomingdale. Home owners cry on the streets when they discuss how this monstrosity has ruined W St.

You really should extend the proposed protections to all R-4 properties, not simply buildings with 3 condos, because not doing so would allow developers of two-condo conversions to continue to remove turrets, to pop up the roofs to 40 feet (not 35), and to push back the building rear to unreasonable dimensions.

Please pass these sensible restrictions contained in ZC14-11 so that when people walk down the streets in Washington they won't be confronted with disastrous pop-ups the likes of which were never envisioned as recently as a decade before now.

A half century ago Jacqueline Kennedy helped preserve many building around the White House and on Pennsylvania Avenue. Now you have the chance to preserve the amazing and historic neighborhood streetscapes—so characteristic of Washington, DC!—in neighborhoods not protected by historic designation, such as Bloomingdale. Seize this opportunity and put some common sense into DC residential zoning codes. (Clearly something is wrong when the monstrosity pictured below is allowed.)

Residents all over the district are crying out for you to do something meaningful. You have heard these requests for action. Please don't ignore them. Pass ZC 14-11 immediately before another neighbor is heartbroken by overzealous developers.

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EXHIBIT NO.286

Sincerely,

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Pictured: The 3-condo conversion at 42 W St NW in an otherwise totally intact R-4 residential block. At face value there is something wrong with zoning that permits THIS to happen!

